

Message Text

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SUBJ: INTOURIST UPS RATES FOR BUSINESSMEN

1. SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, COMMATT LEARNED FROM VISITING REPRESENTATIVES OF BROWN AND SHARPE THAT INTOURIST PLANNED INTRODUCE VERY LARGE (ROUGHLY 100 PERCENT) INCREASE IN RATES CHARGED BUSINESSMEN AS OF JANUARY 1, 1975. LOCAL AMEXCO REPRESENTATIVE HAS NOW CONFIRMED THIS REPORT, AND ACCORDING TO VISITING OFFICIAL OF UNIVERSAL OIL PRODUCTS, NEW RATES ACTUALLY WENT INTO EFFECT ON/ABOUT NOVEMBER 1.

2. INCREASE IS DRAMATIC INDEED. SO-CALLED DELUXE SERVICE NOW COSTS 57 RUBLES (OR ABOUT DOLLARS 76) PER DAY AS OPPOSED TO 34 RUBLES (RO ABOUT DOLLARS 45) PER DAY PREVIOUSLY. INCREASE IS ACTUALLY SOMEWHAT GREATER THAN WOULD APPEAR IN THAT PREVIOUS 34 RUBLE RATE INCLUDED 7 RUBLES IN FORM OF MEAL COUPONS WHILE NEW 57 RUBLE RATE INCLUDES ONLY 1 RUBLE FOR BREAKFAST. OTHER MEALS ARE IN ADDITION TO BASIC 57 RUBLE CHARGE. ONLY CHANGE OF BENEFIT TO BUSINESS VISITORS IS THAT NEW PACKAGE INCLUDES CAR AND DRIVER FOR SIX HOURS PER DAY AS OPPOSED TO THREE HOURS PER DAY PREVIOUSLY. ACCORDING TO AMEXCO REP. 1975 RATES FOR TOURISTS ARE DUE TO INCREASE BY APPROXIMATELY 10 PERCENT. AMEXCO IS CURRENTLY ATTEMPTING TO WORK OUT A PACKAGE ARRANGEMENT WITH INTOURIST FOR BUSINESS

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VISITORS, BUT PROSPECTS DO NOT APPEAR BRIGHT THAT

INTOURIST WILL GO ALONG.

3. SUBJECT OF HIGHER HOTEL RATES FOR BUSINESS VISITORS WAS DISCUSSED AT NOVEMBER 13 MEETING OF U.S. BUSINESSMEN IN MOSCOW AT OFFICE OF TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL (SEE SEPTTEL FOR REPORT ON OTHER TOPICS DISCUSSED AT THAT MEETING). FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, THERE WAS GREAT CONCERN ON PART OF MEMBERS OF BUSINESS COMMUNITY, MANY OF WHOM STILL MAINTAIN OFFICES AND RESIDE IN HOTELS, THAT THEY WILL BE SUBJECT TO SIMILAR INCREASES. IF THIS IS THE CASE, EMBASSY ANTICIPATES THAT THERE WILL BE CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM U.S. FIRMS FOR OFFICIAL DEMARCHE TO SOVIETS, AS WAS THE CASE WHEN INTOURIST LAST INCREASED ITS RATES IN APRIL 1973.
STOESSEL

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